

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 are pending in the application. Claims 1-5 stand rejected.

Applicant submitted all the certified copies of the priority documents concurrently with the filing of the present application. It is respectfully request the Examiner acknowledge receipt of these documents in the next Office Action.

Applicant's claim 1 includes at least the distinguishing features of: a luminance examining unit which examines luminance of the image represented by said digitized image signal, and determines whether or not an amount of light detected by said camera and stored in an image-pickup plane of the camera is appropriate, and a luminance control unit which controls at least one of said camera and said illumination unit so that said amount of light becomes appropriate for suppressing disturbances in said image, when said luminance examining unit determines that the amount of light detected by said camera and stored in the image-pickup plane is not appropriate for suppressing disturbances in said image.

Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Sugimoto (6,441,856).

Sugimoto teaches a digital camera having a flash lamp and a CCD imager. A luminance evaluation value is calculated by a calculator on the basis of a luminance signal included in a camera signal generated by the CCD imager.

As described in Sugimoto col. 7, lines 52-62, the microcomputer 32 of Sugimoto determines the exposure period of the CCD imager 12, which is the shutter speed, for the exposure adjustment on the basis of the luminance evaluation from calculator 26 and instructs a timing of the exposure of the CCD imager 12 on the basis of the determined shutter speed.

(Referred to on page 3, first paragraph of the Office Action). Microcomputer 32 also controls a light emission of the flash lamp.

Sugimoto, however does not show or suggest that a luminance control unit (microcomputer 32) controls the camera and illumination unit so that the amount of light becomes appropriate for suppressing disturbances in the image picked up by the camera when the luminance examining unit determines that the amount of light detected by the camera and stored in the image-pickup plane is not appropriate for suppressing disturbances in the image.

Applicant's claim 1 includes the feature of: a luminance control unit which controls at least one of said camera and said illumination unit so that said amount of light becomes appropriate for suppressing disturbances in said image, when said luminance examining unit determines that the amount of light detected by said camera and stored in the image-pickup plane is not appropriate for suppressing disturbances in said image.

Sugimoto fails to teach the group of features recited in applicant's claim 1 and it is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Sugimoto in view of Yahav (6,445,884 B1). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Sugimoto in view of Yokonuma (6,359,651 B1).

Claims 2-5 depend from claim 1 and are likewise in condition for allowance since none of the additional references teaches the missing elements of the Sugimoto reference.


Yahav teaches a camera having the trough the lens lighting. Yahav does show a variable-aperture iris (64) located near an extended light source (62) and controlling optical extent of the extended light source. Yokonuma, cited in combination with Sugimoto against claim 5, which depends on claim 1, teaches an electronic camera. Although Yokonuma suggests

in col. 2, lines 14-19 that his camera is capable of preventing occurrence of smearing he fails to show or suggest the luminance control unit, which automatically detects blooming or smearing in the image based on the luminance of the image.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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